GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3381
ANSWERED ON:11.12.2002
HANDING OVER OF PAK BASED GURDWARAS
CHANDRESH PATEL KORDIA

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Sikh jathas which visited Gurdwaras in Pakistan during 2000, 2001 and 2002;

(b) whether any demand has been made from any Indian quarter with regard to handing over the operations of Pakistan based Gurdwaras to Indians;

(c) If so, the details thereof; and

(d) the present status of the demand?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH)

(a) In the year 2000, no official Sikh jatha visited Pakistan. Four official Sikh jathas in 2001 and one official Sikh Jatha in 2002 visited Gurdwaras in Pakistan.

(b-d) Under the Protocol on `Visits to Religious Shrines` signed by India and Pakistan in 1974, it is the obligation of the concerned country to make every effort to ensure that places of religious worship in the agreed list are properly maintained and their sanctity preserved.